

## Gamekeeper

Gamekeepers usually work on country estates. They manage wildlife and their habitats, carry out pest control and manage game animal stock for country sports.

### The Work

You could be:

- breeding and managing game birds, deer or fish
- burning heather to make better grazing for game birds
- using a gun and other methods to control vermin such as foxes, crows or rats
- organising shooting and fishing parties, arranging the sale of game afterwards and keeping records of what was shot or caught
- supervising staff such as beaters, who flush out birds from their cover during shoots
- checking that anglers have the correct permits
- patrolling the estate looking for poachers
- training a gun dog and working with it
- repairing fences, game enclosures, and other equipment, and cleaning guns.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Underkeepers can earn around £11,000 a year and single-handed keepers can earn £16,000 a year and above. Head keepers can earn £20,000 to £25,000 a year and upwards.

You may get accommodation rent-free or at a reduced rate. You may also get use of a vehicle, clothing and other allowances. You can also earn extra through tips from shoot or fishing days.

### Conditions

- The work is outdoors in all weathers and it can be muddy, wet and cold.
- You may have to deal with poachers.
- You often have to work on your own.
- Working hours can be long and may vary depending on the time of year.
- You would live and work in the country, often on a country estate, away from towns.
- Your employer may provide you with accommodation and a vehicle.

### Getting In

- A good general education is useful. However, entry can be competitive so it is also helpful to have a group of subjects at National 4 or 5.
- You may get in through a Modern Apprenticeship. There is a framework in Game and Wildlife Management at SCQF Level 5 and another in Rural Skills at SCQF Level 5 and SCQF Level 6/7.
- You could take a NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6), HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in gamekeeping and wildlife management or conservation, countryside skills, countryside management or a similar subject before applying for a job.
- Entry requirements for the NC are up to 4 subjects at National 4 or 5; for the HNC or HND normally 1-2 Highers or the NC are required.
- Previous countryside work experience is helpful, for example in agriculture or forestry.
- You usually need a full, clean driving licence.
- You need to be fit as there is a lot of active outdoors work, often on rough ground.
- As you will use a shotgun, you must have the necessary licence.

## What Does It Take

You need to have:

- an interest in wildlife, the countryside and the environment
- good communications skills
- good organisational skills
- business awareness.

You need to be:

- good with your hands
- sharp-eyed and observant
- reasonably fit and willing to do physical work
- able to work on your own without supervision
- aware of health and safety issues
- able to use a gun safely.

## Training

- Training is normally on the job, often combined with study for a relevant qualification.
- You might be able to take a part time college course to get an HNC, NC or an SVQ.
- SVQs in Game and Wildlife Management are available in five specialisms at SCQF Level 5: Deer (also at SCQF Level 7), Gamekeeping, Game Rearing, Lowland and Upland/Grouse.
- Organisations such as the [British Association for Shooting and Conservation \(BASC\)](#), the [Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust](#) and the [British Deer Society \(BDS\)](#) may be able to provide information on other courses and training opportunities.

## Getting On

- There can be a structured promotion route from underkeeper to second underkeeper or beatkeeper.
- With further experience, you can become 'single-handed' gamekeeper on a small estate.

- You could become a specialist keeper such as a deer stalker or water bailiff.
- You might progress to head gamekeeper on a large estate with responsibility for supervising other staff.
- Some gamekeepers move into related fields such as conservation, countryside management or forestry.

## Contacts

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### Scottish Gamekeepers Association (SGA)

Tel: 01738 587515

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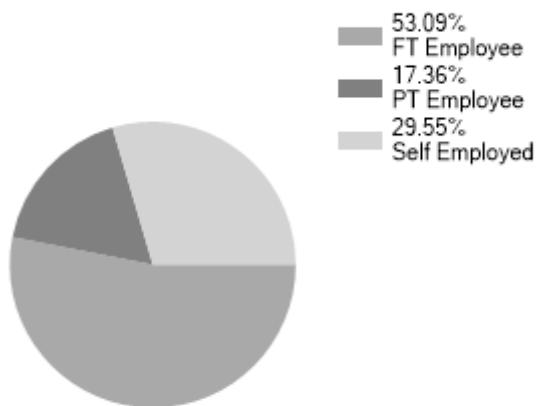
Website: [www.scottishgamekeepers.co.uk](http://www.scottishgamekeepers.co.uk)

X: [@ScotGamekeepers](https://twitter.com/ScotGamekeepers)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Scottish-Gamekeepers-Association-SGA-167161106680272](http://www.facebook.com/Scottish-Gamekeepers-Association-SGA-167161106680272)

## Statistics

Employment Status UK %

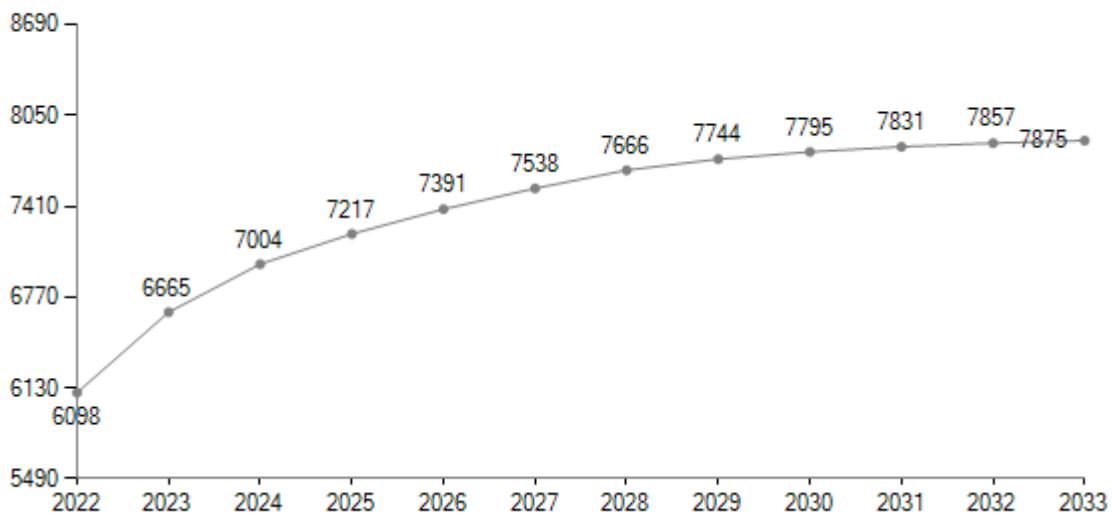


### Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)